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Why Should We Care About Free Speech?

Professor Tom W. Bell of Chapman University argues that freedom of expression is important because it allows people to voice unpopular and controversial opinions.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/JTAp4ft6F6o>

"Freedom of Speech: Is Offensive Speech
Good For Society?" by the Institute for
Humane Studies

Description

Professor Tom W. Bell of Chapman University argues that freedom of expression is important because it allows people to voice unpopular and controversial opinions.

Discussion Questions

Do you believe that counter demonstrations will be strong and responsive enough?

Exercise:

Problem:

Why does Professor Bell argue against censoring offensive speech?

- a. All opinions equally valid.
- b. Free speech is a God-given right.
- c. Speech that authorities once tried to censor has contributed immeasurably to our culture.
- d. The First Amendment requires that the government promote all kinds of speech equally.

Solution:

c. Speech that authorities once tried to censor has contributed immeasurably to our culture.

Introduction to Offensive Speech and Hate Speech

Professor Tom W. Bell of Chapman University introduces the concepts of offensive speech and hate speech.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/O3n89m35Ll8>

"Offensive Speech, Hate Speech, and
Censorship" by the Institute for Humane
Studies

Description

Professor Tom W. Bell of Chapman University introduces the concepts of offensive speech and hate speech.

Charlie Hebdo and Offensive Speech

Greg Lukianoff of George Mason University and the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education argues that media censorship and hate speech laws escalated attacks against offensive speech like the attack on Charlie Hebdo.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/TsCUbsdS3S0>

"Blasphemy and Hate Speech" by the
Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Greg Lukianoff of George Mason University and the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education argues that media censorship and hate speech laws escalated attacks against offensive speech like the attack on Charlie Hebdo.

Discussion Questions

Professor Lukianoff argues that hate speech laws signal to people that there is a right not to be offended. Do you believe there is a right not to be offended? Why or why not? How do hate speech laws influence people's reactions to offensive speech?

Trigger Warnings and Freedom From Speech

Greg Lukianoff of George Mason University and the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education explains the impact of trigger warnings and attempts to disinvite speakers have had on college campuses.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/Bm7wP-wWGCQ>

"Trigger Warnings & Freedom FROM Speech"
by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Greg Lukianoff of George Mason University and the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education explains the impact of trigger warnings and attempts to disinvite speakers have had on college campuses.

Exercise:

Problem:

Why is Professor Lukianoff concerned about trigger warnings?

- a. He is concerned that they do not do enough to protect students suffering from PTSD.
- b. He is concerned that faculty
- c. He is concerned that they have been taken too far and are being used to prevent any controversial topic from being discussed in the classroom.

Solution:

- c. He is concerned that they have been taken too far and are being used to prevent any controversial topic from being discussed in the classroom.

Censoring Sex and Comedy

Greg Lukianoff of George Mason University and the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education warns that we should not censor speech that we find offensive because what society considers offensive versus liberating is constantly changing.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/_264y_Zvjpc

"Freedom of Speech: Why Are Sex and Comedy Censored?" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Greg Lukianoff of George Mason University and the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education warns that we should not censor speech that we find offensive because what society considers offensive versus liberating is constantly changing.

Discussion Questions

Why do you think censorship has swung to students requesting it rather than parents/authorities? Do you think this pattern will continue?

Exercise:

Problem: Why should obscene and offensive speech not be restricted?

- a. Only some find it offensive.
- b. What was used to censor one group today could be used to censor a different group tomorrow.
- c. What is considered offensive today might not be in the future.
- d. All of the above.

Solution:

- d. All of the above.

How Free Speech Is Threatened Today

Greg Lukianoff of George Mason University and the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education explains where and how free speech is being threatened around the world today and why it's worth fighting for.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/sjiN_aSKABo

"How Free Speech Is Threatened Today"
by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Greg Lukianoff of George Mason University and the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education explains where and how free speech is being threatened around the world today and why it's worth fighting for.

Discussion Question

How have free speech rights been violated in your country? In your own life? Do you think those restrictions are justified? Why or why not?

Introduction to Commercial and Persuasive Speech

Professor Tom W. Bell of Chapman University introduces two types of speech that are frequently threatened: commercial speech and persuasive speech.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/zi0h2s5rWmM>

"Commercial and Persuasive Speech" by
the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Professor Tom W. Bell of Chapman University introduces two types of speech that are frequently threatened: commercial speech and persuasive speech.

Political Speech

Paul Sherman of the Institute for Justice explains how political speech has been threatened in recent years.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/Bd4MkPdc TE>

"Political Speech" by the Institute for
Humane Studies

Description

Paul Sherman of the Institute for Justice explains how political speech has been threatened in recent years.

Discussion Questions

The Supreme Court's decision in Citizens United vs. the Federal Election Commission upheld the rights of corporations and unions to spend money on political speech. Do you think that corporations and unions have First Amendment rights? Why or why not?

Is money a form of speech? Why or why not?

Commercial Speech

According to Paul Sherman of the Institute for Justice, commercial speech has traditional been treated as outside the scope of the First Amendment.

[https://www.youtube.com/embed/ wL6m28bGvY](https://www.youtube.com/embed/wL6m28bGvY)

"Commercial Speech" by the Institute for
Humane Studies

Description

According to Paul Sherman of the Institute for Justice, commercial speech has traditional been treated as outside the scope of the First Amendment.

Exercise:

Problem:

By restricting commercial speech the government has categorized commercial speech along with what other types of speech?

- a. Obscene and lewd.
- b. Hateful and offensive.
- c. Defamation and fraud.
- d. Libel and slander.

Solution:

- c. Defamation and fraud.

Introduction to Free Speech in Education

Professor Tom W. Bell of Chapman University introduces issues related to free speech on college campuses.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/NQy-7HjH5Rk>

"Free Speech in Education" by the Institute
for Humane Studies

Description

Professor Tom W. Bell of Chapman University introduces issues related to free speech on college campuses.

Academic Freedom- What It Is and Why It Matters

Will Creely of the Foundation for Individual Rights of Education defines academic freedom and explains why it's crucial for creating a true environment for learning.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/tqgtoR3fkkk>

"Academic Freedom: What It Is & Why It Matters" by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Will Creely of the Foundation for Individual Rights of Education defines academic freedom and explains why it's crucial for creating a true environment for learning.

Exercise:

Problem: The goal of academic freedom is to protect

- a. faculty's job security.
- b. the university's administration from frivolous lawsuits.
- c. the rights of students and faculty to research, teach, debate, and discuss ideas without outside interference or censorship.

Solution:

- c. the rights of students and faculty to research, teach, debate, and discuss ideas without outside interference or censorship.

Campus Speech Codes and Zones

Samantha Harris of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education explains two of the main tactics universities use to restrict free speech of students on campus.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/A9cF2HWhf8U>

"Campus Speech Zones & Codes" by the
Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Samantha Harris of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education explains two of the main tactics universities use to restrict free speech of students on campus.

Discussion Questions

How does your university censor free speech? Do they employ speech codes or free speech zones? Do you think that your university's policies violate or are consistent with the First Amendment? Why or why not?

The History of Free Speech On Campus Litigation
Azhar Majeed of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education gives an overview of some of important court cases defending free speech on college campuses.

https://www.youtube.com/embed/iRvwp_6mLdc

"The History of Free Speech On Campus
Litigation" by the Institute for Humane
Studies

Description

Azhar Majeed of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education gives an overview of some of important court cases defending free speech on college campuses.

Exercise:

Problem:

The most common type of university speech code that the free speech advocates fight against is the:

- a. defamation policy.
- b. harassment policy.
- c. offensive speech policy.
- d. sexist speech policy.

Solution:

- b. harassment policy.

The "Stand Up for Speech" Litigation Project
Catherine Sevchenko of George Mason University explains how the
Foundation for Individual Rights in Education is fighting back against free
speech violations on college campuses.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/ADcN0sC01RY>

"Is There Freedom Of Speech In College?"
by the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

Catherine Sevchenko of George Mason University explains how the
Foundation for Individual Rights in Education is fighting back against free
speech violations on college campuses.

Exercise:

Problem:

Free speech on campus litigation often targets public universities
because

- a. public universities violate free speech more often than private universities.
- b. public universities have more money.
- c. private universities are easier to target.
- d. public universities are bound by the First Amendment.

Solution:

- d. public universities are bound by the First Amendment.

Does Free Speech Help Minorities?

According to Ari Cohn of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, a frequent argument used against free speech is that minorities and marginalized people should be protected from hate speech. Cohn argues that free speech is actually one of minorities' greatest weapons against oppression.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/g9sjPWS8yBQ>

"Does Free Speech Help Minorities?" by
the Institute for Humane Studies

Description

According to Ari Cohn of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, a frequent argument used against free speech is that minorities and marginalized people should be protected from hate speech. Cohn argues that free speech is actually one of minorities' greatest weapons against oppression. What do you think? Does free speech help or harm minorities? How?

Discussion Questions

Summarize Ari Cohn's definition of "liberal science." Do you think it would help minorities, as Cohn does?